

Mary Garden Coffin

1920

The Metropolitan Opera Company  
Presents  
"CARMEN"



Mary Garden as Carmen  
Boston Opera House

Mary's first opera -- at school in Boston -- 2nd balcony.



# "TRISTAN" SUNG AT MATINEE

Superb Performance of  
Greatest Music  
Drama

BY WARREN STOREY SMITH

Yesterday afternoon, for a second time during its engagement at the Opera House, the Metropolitan Company performed Wagner's "Tristan und Isolde" before a large and conspicuously enthusiastic audience. The same man and woman the cast was the same as that which presented the music drama here last Friday evening and Mr. Bodanzky again conducted.

## THE GREAT THIRD ACT

To put the matter very personally, an afternoon performance of "Tristan," something that has not happened in Boston in many a long year, proved a boon to the critic on the morning news paper, who usually must hear the third act, the most profoundly moving and beautiful in all opera, with one eye on his watch, wondering how much longer it is expedient to stay. And yesterday afternoon this act was well worth waiting for. No one else sings the Liebestod as Mme. Flagstead sings it, and this act is Mr. Melchior's opportunity. In the first two he is hardly the romantic figure that some, who like their opera realistic, would desire. But as the delirious invalid of the third, whose appearance, goodness knows, does not greatly matter, Mr. Melchior rises to heights of vocal expressiveness. Halfway musical Wagnerites are always protesting that Tristan's delirium gives them the shivers. Those who know better are aware that in this scene Wagner's music dramatist surpassed even himself; and there is the final passage of Tristan's vision of the ship, with its culminating "Ach! Isolde," that some have held to be the loveliest music Wagner has given us.

In view of the fact that the achievements of Mme. Flagstead and Mr. Melchior were already familiar to us, the most memorable feature of the present Wagnerian performances at the Opera House has been the appearance of Kerstin Thorborg in the various contralto roles, two of which, those of Magdalene in this evening's "Die Meistersinger" and of Venus in Saturday afternoon's "Tannhaeuser," are still to come. With all due respect to Mme. Flagstead, it was difficult in the first scene not to find Mme. Thorborg's Brangaene the centre of musical and dramatic interest. As singing actress Mme. Thorborg has literally everything that the fondest wish could desire.

The Metropolitan company has made a valuable acquisition in Herbert Janssen, who gave yesterday a moving portrayal of Kurvenal. And thanks to Emanuel List and to Mr. Bodanzky, King Mark's address in the second act was something not to be endured but to be enjoyed.

Kirsten Flagstad



Maurice Seymour, Chicago

As Isolde Saturday afternoon at the Metropolitan Opera House

It is an old story that Mr. Bodanzky is an unpredictable conductor who, though always efficient, seems sometimes a little cold and over precise. Yesterday from the first note to the last he conducted an orchestral performance that left nothing to be desired in the score of eloquence and expressiveness. He might well have had more strings at his command, but those that he did have played for all that they were worth. A special word must be said for the beautiful delivery of the English horn solo in Act III. It was a disillusioning to have the shepherd, Mr. Laufkoetter, appear immediately afterwards, carrying a tiny reed that was obviously incapable of producing those haunting sounds.

"AIDA" IN EVENING

194

Marie and Melle  
Boston

194

Tristan in afternoon...  
Aida same evening.

Flagstead &  
Melchior in  
"Tristan"



# BOSTON OPERA HOUSE—

MANAGEMENT  
MESSRS. LEE & J. J. SHUBERT

METROPOLITAN OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.  
of New York

GRAND OPERA SEASON 1945 - 1946

EDWARD JOHNSON, General Manager

FRIDAY EVENING, APRIL 12, 1946, AT 8 O'CLOCK

## DIE WALKUERE

Music Drama in Three Acts

BOOK and MUSIC by RICHARD WAGNER

Siegmond .....		Torsten Ralf
Hunding .....		Emanuel List
Wotan .....		Herbert Janssen
Sieglinde .....		Astrid Varnay
Bruennhilde .....		Helen Traubel
Fricka .....		Kerstin Thorborg
Helmwige .....		Beale Hober
Gerhilde .....	} Valkyries {	Thelma Votipka
Ortlinde .....		Irene Jessner
Rossweisse .....		Lucielle Browning
Gringerde .....		Martha Lipton
Waltraute .....		Jeanne Palmer
Siegrune .....		Herta Glaz
Schwertleite .....		Margaret Harshaw

Conductor ..... Paul Breisach

Stage Director ..... Lothar Wallerstein

*April 12, 1946.*

*Marie went alone -- stayed with Helen Lomer on Beacon Hill's  
Joy St.  
Edward Johnson smiled at me when I arrived late &  
met him alone on stairs!  
Box seat.*



# BOSTON OPERA HOUSE

MANAGEMENT—MESSRS. LEE AND J. J. SHUBERT

METROPOLITAN OPERA ASSOCIATION, INC.  
New York

GRAND OPERA SEASON 1946 - 1947

EDWARD JOHNSON, General Manager

SATURDAY EVENING, MARCH 29, 1947, AT 8 O'CLOCK

## FAUST

Opera in four acts (six scenes)

Book by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré

MUSIC by CHARLES GOUNOD

Faust .....	Charles Kullman
Mephistopheles .....	Ezio Pinza
Valentin .....	Martial Singher
Wagner .....	George Cehanovsky
Marguerite .....	Dorothy Kirsten
Siebel .....	Martha Lipton
Marthe .....	Claramae Turner

ACT I, Scene 2—"Valse"—The ballet.

Conductor .....	Louis Fourestier
Stage director .....	Desire Defrere
Chorus master .....	Kurt Adler
Choreography by .....	Boris Romanoff



*Marie and Merle.*

*Mar. 29, 1947*



# On Stage

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## SHUBERT THEATRE

DIRECTION—MESSRS. LEE AND J. J. SHUBERT

PROGRAM WEEK MARCH 28, 1949

RICHARD RODGERS and OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd  
in association with LELAND HAYWARD and JOSHUA LOGAN

present

MARY  
MARTIN

EZIO  
PINZA

In A New Musical Play

## South Pacific

Music by RICHARD RODGERS

Lyrics by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd

Book by OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2nd and JOSHUA LOGAN

Adapted from JAMES A. MICHENER'S Pulitzer Prize Winning "TALES OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC"

Book and Musical Numbers Staged by JOSHUA LOGAN

Scenery and Lighting by JO MIELZINER

Costumes by MOTLEY

MYRON WILLIAM MARTIN with JUANITA BETTA HENRY ARCHIE  
McCORMICK - TABBERT - WOLFSON - STEPHENS - HALL - ST. JOHN SLATE - SAVAGE  
Musical Director  
SALVATORE DELL'ISOLA  
Orchestrations by  
ROBERT RUSSELL BENNETT

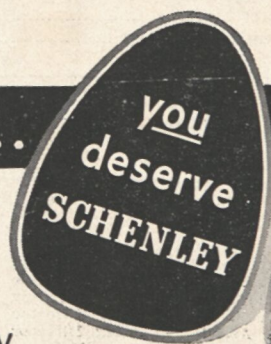
When day is done...



A Schenley  
Mark of Merit Whiskey

ENJOY RARE PRE-WAR QUALITY

BLENDED WHISKEY 65% grain neutral spirits. 86 proof. Copr. 1948, Schenley Distillers Corporation, N. Y. C.



LEFT H 17  
SHUBERT THEATRE  
GOOD ONLY  
TUESDAY EVE. 29  
MARCH  
1st BALCONY \$3.60  
GLOBE TICKET COMPANY—BOSTON

(continued)





Ezio Pinza, as planter Emil de Becque, is reunited at the end of the play with Mary Martin, as Nellie Forbush, the nurse from Arkansas. She has overcome her original objections to the fact that he had two children by a Polynesian wife, who has since died, and agrees to marry him and stay on the island. The children, Barbara Luna and Michael de Leon, are obviously pleased with this arrangement



Myron McCormick, as Luther Billis, of the Seabees, who "operates" the island laundry and other concessions, returns from a visit to the near-by island of Bali-Ha'i with a floral souvenir from its girls



Juanita Hall, as the memorable Liat (Betta St. John) sing a song to Joe Cable (William Tabbert) on the



## OPERA

### OPERA HOUSE

#### 'La Boheme'

Opera in 4 acts in Italian, with music by Giacomo Puccini and libretto by Giacosa and Illica, based on Henri Murger's "La Vie de Boheme;" presented last evening at the Boston Opera House by the Metropolitan Opera Association with Giuseppe Antonicelli conducting, stage direction by Desire Defrere and the following cast:

45. Rodolfo .....	Ferruccio Tagliavini
Schaunard .....	Hugh Thompson
30. Benoit .....	Melchiorre Luise
Mimi .....	Bidu Sayao
40. Parpignol .....	Anthony Marlowe
35. Marcello .....	Francesco Valentino
Colline .....	Nicola Moscona
30. Alcindoro .....	Melchiorre Luise
Musetta .....	Mimi Benzell
zon A Sergeant .....	Lawrence Davidson

#### By ELINOR HUGHES

I don't imagine that "La Boheme" is an easy opera to present, for it requires an exceptional amount of fine singing and must be acted with persuasion and directed with romantic charm and youthful exuberance, qualities not easily come by all at the same time in any branch of entertainment. Yet I have been lucky enough never to have seen a bad performance of the Puccini opera and now and again, as of last night, the quality of the production is exceptional throughout. The singers were in fine voice, the acting was alternately humorous and imbued with romantic pathos, and the opera took on the freshness of something seen and heard for the first time.

Bidu Sayao is an ideal Mimi, bringing out the innocent coquetry, wistful yearning and appealing fragility of the character, and singing with exquisite tonal quality and sweetness throughout. It is hard if not impossible to select any one scene that stood out above the others, but she was particularly fine in the third act duet with Rodolfo, and her death scene had the audience audibly in tears. Her voice is not large, but she uses it with great skill and admirable results. Ferruccio Tagliavini, making his only appearance here this year with the Metropolitan, was a fine Rodolfo, singing with volume and expression, admirable tone and a lack of the sob in the throat often employed by interpreters of this emotional part. The audience greeted both of them with cheers and bravos at curtain fall and appreciated them warmly throughout.

Mimi Benzell was a vivacious and genuinely attractive Musetta, singing as delightfully as she acted and never resorting to such exaggerated antics in the second as have been known to make the character absurd rather than amusing; Francesco Valentino—who is the Metropolitan's hardest-working baritone of the current season—made a satisfactory Marcello; Nicola Moscona as Colline sang his aria to his coat in musicianly fashion; Hugh Thompson was a

likeable Schaunard, and Melchiorre Luise doubled capably the roles of Benoit and Alcindoro. Giuseppe Antonicelli conducted skilfully, and the chorus sang with spirit and gaiety.

Tonight's opera will be Benjamin Britten's "Peter Grimes," which is having its Boston premiere.

*Boston Herald  
review*



WEDNESDAY EVENING, MARCH 30, 1949, AT 8.30 O'CLOCK

# LA BOHEME

Opera in four acts

Founded on "La Vie de Boheme" by Henry Murger

Book by Giuseppe Giacosa and Luigi Illica

MUSIC by GIACOMO PUCCINI

Rodolfo .....	Ferruccio Tagliavini
Schaunard .....	Hugh Thompson
Benoit .....	Melchiorre Luise
Mimi .....	Bidu Sayao
Parpignol .....	Anthony Marlowe
Marcello .....	Francesco Valentino
Colline .....	Nicola Moscona
Alcindoro .....	Melchiorre Luise
Musetta .....	Mimi Benzell
A sergeant .....	Lawrence Davidson

Conductor .....Giuseppe Antonicelli

Stage director .....Desire Defrere

Chorus master .....Kurt Adler

## Opera

### Boston Opera House

Edward Johnson....General Manager

### SEASON OF 1949

LEFT  
CNTR B 115  
1st BALCONY

BOSTON OPERA HOUSE

GOOD ONLY  
WED'DAY EVE. 30  
1949

GLOBE TICKET COMPANY, BOSTON

*Maria and Mole -- 2nd of 3 nights*



THURSDAY EVENING, MARCH 31, 1949, AT 8:15 O'CLOCK

# PETER GRIMES

Opera in three acts and prologue (seven scenes)

From the poem of George Crabbe

Words by Montagu Slater

MUSIC by BENJAMIN BRITTEN

Peter Grimes, a fisherman .....	Brian Sullivan
Ellen Orford, a widow, schoolmistress of the Borough .....	Polyna Stoska
Captain Balstrode, retired merchant skipper .....	John Brownlee
Auntie, landlady of "The Boar" .....	Jean Browning-Madeira
Two nieces, main attractions of "The Boar" .....	{ Paula Lenchner
Bob Boles, fisherman and Methodist .....	{ Maxine Stellman
Swallow, a lawyer .....	Thomas Hayward
Mrs. (Nabob) Sedley, a rentier widow of an East India Company's factor .....	Jerome Hines
Rev. Horace Adams, the rector .....	Martha Lipton
Ned Keene, apothecary and quack .....	John Garriss
Hobson, carrier .....	Hugh Thompson
A lawyer .....	Philip Kinsman
A fisherwoman .....	Anthony Marlowe
A fisherman .....	Thelma Altman
Dr. Thorp .....	Lawrence Davidson
Boy (John), Peter Grimes' apprentice .....	Matthew Vittucci
Chorus of townspeople and fisherfolk.	P. J. Smithers

Conductor ..... Emil Cooper  
Production staged by Dino Yannopoulos  
Chorus master ..... Kurt Adler  
Scenery designed by Joseph Novak  
and painted by Karl Koeck  
Costumes designed by Mary Percy Schenck

*Boston Opera House*

*Edward Johnson....General Manager*

SEASON OF 1949

LEFT  
CENTRE  
B 117  
1st BALCONY  
BOSTON OPERA HOUSE  
GOOD ONLY  
THURSDAY EVE.  
MARCH 31  
1949

*Marie and Merle -- 3rd night of 3.*



Broadcast



Left: World's greatest Wagnerian tenor, Lauritz Melchior, sings the title role in "Parsifal" Friday. Right: Emanuel List as Gurnemanz

The Metropolitan Opera Company

Presents Special

Performance of Richard Wagner's

"PARSIFAL"

The Cast:

Parsifal . . . . .	Lauritz Melchior
Gurnemanz . . . . .	Emanuel List
Amfortas . . . . .	Friedrich Schorr
Kundry . . . . .	Kirsten Flagstad
Titirel . . . . .	Norman Cordon
Klingsor . . . . .	Arnold Gabor

Conductor, Artur Bodanzky

FRIDAY, APRIL 15 at 12:55 p.m. EST on NBC-Blue

April 15, 1938



# Broadcasts

SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 1937  
at 2 p.m. EST on NBC

The Metropolitan Opera Company

Presents

"IL TROVATORE"

by Giuseppe Verdi

The Cast:

Leonara . . .	Zinka Milanov
Azucena . . .	Bruna Castagna
Inez . . .	Thelma Votipka
Manrico . . .	Giovanni Martinelli
Count Di Luna . . .	Richard Bonelli
Ferrando . . .	Virgilio Lazzari
Ruiz . . .	Giordano Paltrinieri

Conductor, Gennaro Papi

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12 1937  
at 2 p.m. EST on NBC-Blue

The Metropolitan Opera Company

Presents

"OTELLO"

by Giuseppe Verdi

The Cast:

Otello . . .	Giovanni Martinelli
Iago . . .	Lawrence Tibbett
Cassio . . .	Nicholas Massue
Desdemona . . .	Elisabeth Rethberg
Emilia . . .	Thelma Votipka

Conductor, Ettore Panizza

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA COMPANY  
presents

"AIDA"

by

Giuseppe Verdi

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 4 1938

On NBC at 2 p.m. EST; 1 p.m. CST; 12 noon MST; 11 a.m. PST

THE CAST:

Aida . . .	Zinka Milanov
Rhadames . . .	Beniamino Gigli
Amonasro . . .	Carlo Tagliabue
Amneris . . .	Bruna Castagna
Ramfis . . .	Ezio Pinza
King of Egypt . . .	Norman Cordon
Priestess . . .	Thelma Votipka

Conductor - Ettore Panizza

THE METROPOLITAN OPERA COMPANY  
presents

"THE BARBER OF SEVILLE"

by

Gioacchino Rossini

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 1938

On NBC at 2 p.m. EST; 1 p.m. CST; 12 noon MST; 11 a.m. PST

THE CAST:

Rosina . . .	Lily Pons
Count Almaviva . . .	Nino Martini
Bartolo . . .	Virgilio Lazzari
Basilio . . .	Ezio Pinza
Figaro . . .	Richard Bonelli
The Maid . . .	Irra Petina
An Official . . .	Giordano Paltrinieri

Conductor - Gennaro Papi



# 151 OPERA

OPERA HOUSE

## "Die Fledermaus"

"Die Fledermaus," an operetta in three acts by Johann Strauss in an English Version by Garson Kanin with lyrics by Howard Dietz from a libretto by Haffner and Genée. Staged for the Metropolitan by Garson Kanin with costumes and decor by Rolf Gerard and conducted by Tibor Kozma with the following cast:

Gabriel von Eisenstein, a well-to-do  
Rosalinda, his wife.....Marguerite Piazza  
Adele, their maid.....Patrice Munsel  
Ida, her sister.....Suzanne Ames  
Alfred, a wild cat.....Brian Sullivan  
Prince Orlofsky, a prince  
Jarmila Novotna  
Dr. Falke, the noted Ballmaster  
John Brownlee  
Frank, a warden.....Hugh Thompson  
Dr. Blind, Eisenstein's lawyer  
Paul Franke  
Frosch, a jailer.....Jack Gilford

A brilliant occasion this, certainly the most extraordinary and gala evening of the musical theater in Boston in recent years, and all the more so for the fact that for once a show with a prodigious reputation lived up to that reputation in every particular; indeed, exceeded it.

It is hard to know where to begin to give a soccer report. The music of Johann Strauss, with its irresistible Viennese melody breaking constantly into unendurably lilting rhythms? The text and lyrics, superbly fashioned into singable (and wonderfully entertaining) English by Garson Kanin and Howard Dietz? The stunning decor and costumes of Rolf Gerard? The choreography and execution of that lovely Imperial waltz? The orchestra, the conductor, the staging, the acting, the singing, or what?

Perhaps the acting and the singing deserve the first attention at this moment, for the execution and driving projection of these elements across the footlights in so impactful a fashion was truly the most extraordinary aspect of the entire evening. We have all known and admired, largely as vocalists, such Metropolitan stars as Patrice Munsel, Charles Kullman, Marguerite Piazza, Brian Sullivan, Hugh Thompson and Jarmila Novotna, but they have been able to act like this all along? Heavens, I can hardly believe it!

Miss Munsel in particular was no less than a revelation. After a couple of offish seasons she has made fantastic strides vocally; her coloratura was marked by extreme exactitude, flexibility of articulation and ravishing sound even at the very top of her tessitura. But she was a superb comedienne, too; whether tossing a naughty bustle, brushing away an arch team or dissolving onto the floor in a seductive collapse (to receive a snifter of brandy from the prompter's box in a monstrously funny incongruity), she was sheer sensation . . . and how she did look!

Marguerite Piazza, as vocalist, actress and seducer of her own

husband, was almost equally marvelous to see and hear. They all were, for that matter: Charles Kullman as the philandering Von Eisenstein, Brian Sullivan, whose high A could understandably rock the Von Eisenstein family boat; John Brownlee as the Bat manipulating the assorted dalliance; Hugh Thompson as the amiable jail warden and Jarmila Novotna as the Prince who threw the party to end all parties. They were in varying voice, to be sure, Miss Novotna, for example, never attempting to extend her vocalise into the greater realms. Yet whether they were doing such completely disarming things as "A Lady's Name," "Look Me Over Once," the Tzigana, "Drink Her Down" or such ensembles as "Happiness" developing into the great "You and I," they carried all before them to make the second act finale one of the most memorable moments in the experience of nearly all of us.

A word for—as the program puts them—the guests, dancers, singers, servants, bums, prisoners and tarts; they were wonderful. And what might have happened to the third act without the excruciating pantomime and monologue of Jack Gilford as the tipsy jailer is too ghastly to imagine, for neither Strauss nor anyone else in the world could have ever topped the second act. A word, too, for the conducting of Tibor Kozma; its rhythmical impulse was radiant and all-persuasive. In fact, a word for everybody concerned, that word being 'bravo!' As for Mr. Rudolf Bing, whose special child this was, the word is 'bravissimo!'

## THE ROVING EYE

By RUDOLPH ELIE

### The Mystery Man Of the Metropolitan

The assistant stage manager came swiftly down the corridor in front of the dressing rooms. "Signore, signorine," he bellowed bilingually, "due minuto to curtain time, on stage, signore, signorine!" A quiet man of middle years with grey hair, humorous brown eyes behind tortoiseshimmed spectacles, a jaunty red foulard bow tie and a shiny black cotton work jacket, waggled a finger at me. "Avanti," he said.

I followed him down the narrow stairs to the below-stage level of the Opera House and, head bent low, weaved through the forest of instrument cases, electric cables and apparatus for raising and lowering trap doors everywhere about. Above, on the stage, was the sound of the final, peremptory orders of stage managers and the running feet of stage hands. I began to feel as nervous and excited as if I were myself making a Metropolitan debut.

My guide, the shadowy, mysterious, unknown figure known as the prompter, led me into a minute and dusty cubby hole divided into two tiny sections and opening above directly onto the stage itself. He climbed up into one and waved me into the other; both were equipped with gilt chairs.

Seated in the chair my head stuck up a foot above the stage level. Overhead and in back was the black hood nestled low behind the footlights familiar to all opera goers, the prompter's box. It was, from the inside, a strange world of its own, conveying a sense of secret, complete isolation from the glittering audience behind yet of incredibly personal contact with the events on the stage.

The prompter, the battered piano score of "The Barber of Seville" propped up on a stand before him, turned and smiled, holding up a finger for silence. "No talk," he said kindly, "and no cigarette, eh?" I was too scared to do either even if they'd occurred to me. The overture over, the curtain swept apart, and the character of

reproduction of scene reserved.

Mile. from opera Boston 1951



coloratura was marked by extreme exactitude, flexibility of articulation and ravishing sound even at the very top of her tessitura. But she was a superb commedienne, too; whether tossing a naughty bustle, brushing away an arch team or dissolving onto the floor in a seductive collapse (to receive a snifter of brandy from the prompter's box in a monstrously funny incongruity), she was sheer sensation . . . and how she did look!

Marguerite Piazza, as vocalist, actress and seducer of her own

of "The Barber of Seville" propped up on a stand before him, turned and smiled, holding up a finger for silence. "No talk," he said kindly, "and no cigarette, eh?" I was too scared to do either even if they'd occurred to me. The overture over, the curtain swept apart, and the character of Fiorello followed by a bunch of musicians of Seville came onto the stage not a dozen yards away. Fiorello glanced anxiously at the prompter as the introductory music was heard in the orchestra.

"Piano!" cried the prompter, pointing a sharp finger at him. "Piano, pianissimo senza parla," sang Fiorello. "Tutti!" cried the prompter, as Fiorello drew breath for the next phrase. "Tutti con me venite qua," sang Fiorello. "Piano!" shouted the prompter at the chorus, which was eyeing his every move. "Piano, pianissimo," sang the chorus.

Eugene Conley, resplendent as the Count of Almaviva entered, his eye seemingly following the action on the stage, but actually, I could see, on the prompter. The prompter, a second before Conley's cue, snapped his finger. "Fiorello ola!" he bellowed in a voice that seemed to me must have carried to the eaves (but actually is seldom heard in the audience). "Fiorello ola!" sang the tenor.

As the intensity of the pace increased the prompter, waving his arms and fingers, shouting, whistling, beating time, snapping his fingers, and rapping on the stage to attract a straying chorus member's attention, and giving every cue to every line sung, seemed to be singing every role, directing every actor, and supplying every word of the opera all by himself. And the singers, to my great astonishment, hardly ever seemed to cast a glance in the direction of the conductor. To them the only person who seemed to exist at all was the prompter; their eyes never strayed far from him.

During the entre-act I learned that the prompter was Otello Ceroni, who has been with the Metropolitan Opera Company as prompter for all languages but German for 19 years. "I have to take care of them like babies," said Mr. Ceroni, who is prompter for the Buenos Aires opera, too, "you never know what might happen, especially at a debut." The "Barber" was the most difficult opera of all to prompt, he confided, as the tempos were so fast, the words so torrential.

### 'Our Trade Secret'

Aside from knowing all the operas absolutely cold, a prompter's chief requirement, he said, was the ability to acquire the complete confidence and trust of the singers, who, though usually letter perfect in their roles, know that he is there to give them not only their word cues, but their tempos and even pitch cues, too, if in the excitements of performance they lapse for a split second.

In the hilarious second and third acts with their comic ensembles, their outrageous patter songs and their frantic activity, they did lapse from time to time. At this Mr. Ceroni in his little cell would laugh, clap his brow, and shout out the proper words and cues to the singers who often could hardly keep from expressing their merriment at their own little accidents. "But nobody notices the accidents out there," said Mr. Ceroni, waving in the direction of the audience behind us, "they are so small that only the singers and I know about them. And this shall be our trade secret, no?"

And so it shall, but it is no trade secret that a night at the opera in the prompter's box remains one of the most stunning adventures I've ever had; I'd like to stake out that little cell on the front of the stage for myself for good.

## THE BOSTON HERALD

FRIDAY, APRIL 13, 1951

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# THE BALLET

By RUDOLPH ELIE, Jr.

## BOSTON OPERA HOUSE

under the management of  
Messrs. Lee & J. J. Shubert

THURSDAY EVENING NOVEMBER 6TH 1941

S. HUOK

presents the

## BALLET Russe

de

MONTE CARLO

SPONSORED BY UNIVERSAL ART, INC.

LOCAL MANAGEMENT: AARON RICHMOND

1.

## LABYRINTH

Libretto by Salvador DALI based on the classic myth of Theseus and Ariadne

Scenery and Costumes by Salvador DALI

Music by Franz SCHUBERT (Seventh Symphony in C Major)

Choreography by Leonide MASSINE

In "Labyrinth" one revives the eternal myth of the esthetic and idealogic confusion which characterizes romanticism, and especially, in the highest degree that of our epoch. The "thread of Ariadne," thanks to which Theseus succeeds in finding the exit from the Labyrinth, symbolizes the tradition, the continuity, the thread of classicism, the savior. All romanticism merely searches more or less dramatically its "thread of Ariadne," of classicism.

Lord Byron, the most integrated of the romantics, died romantically in the classicism of his beloved Greece, and Schubert, in his Seventh Symphony, finds, by the uninterrupted continuity, the "thread of Ariadne," of his melody the exit from the musical labyrinth.

★ ★ ★

At the beginning the three Fates, who symbolize destiny, attempt to prevent Theseus (symbol of history) from entering the labyrinth.

But Theseus overpowers his destiny, enters the labyrinth, saves the virgin couples (the people), kills the Minotaur (symbol of revolution) and, thanks to the thread of Ariadne (tradition), finds the exit from that abode of death.

After the festival which celebrates the liberation of the people the romantic symbols of the Orient are seen.

Theseus abandons Ariadne on the shore and departs for new adventures, triumphantly borne by the apotheosis of the Sea which symbolizes the merciless march of history and which in its heroic and blind course alternately revives classicism and romanticism through the eternal sacrifice of the people.

### First Tableau

Theseus ..... Igor YOUSKEVITCH  
The Maidens ..... Mlles. MLADOVA, ROUDENKO, ISTOMINA,  
CRABTREE, KORJINSKA, WOICKOWSKA, LVOVA  
The Amazons . Mlles. GRANTZEVA, GELEZNOVA, BROWN, SEMENOVA

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of it; its action develops more clearly, its best parts look better and its weak parts look stronger. The final scene remains by far the most effective. It still seems to be in the process of evolution, for a number of improvements were in evidence. The principals were given more stage to dance in and, taking it by and large, Massine has clarified many a detail. The first criticism of the work—namely that Dali's decor submerge's Massine's choreography—is not so true now. If it goes on like this, "Labyrinth" might well remain in the repertoire since it is not so unwieldy as the far more effective "Bacchanale." Igor Youskevitch and Tamara Toumanova again dancing the central roles, were especially fine in the final love scene.

The evening concluded with a gay performance of "Vienna-1814," with particularly exciting divertissements contributed by Chris Volkoff, Anna Istominia and Leonide Massine and Alexandra Danilova and Igor Youskevitch. Franz Allers and Efrem Kurtz shared the conducting duties. Tonight's repertoire includes "Les Sylphides," "New Yorker" and "Beau Danube."

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Marie went, alone - Nov. 6, 1941



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Madame de Sagan .....  
Murat's Ambassadors ..... Alexis KOSLOFF  
Their Wives ..... Anna SCARLETT  
Dutch Legation ..... Tatiana  
Tyrolian Legation ..... Lubov ROUDENKO and  
Count Rasumovsky .....  
Monkey .....

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Pas de Deux

Alexandra DANILOVA and Igor

Mazurka

Katia GELEZNOVA and Frederic

Miles. MARRA, CRABTREE

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# THE BALLET

By RUDOLPH ELIE, Jr.

## OPERA HOUSE

## Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo

Last night at the Boston Opera House the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, sponsored by S. Hurok in association with Aaron Richmond, presented the following program:

"Vienna—1814," a ballet in one act with choreography by Leonide Massine, music by Von Weber and for principal dancers, Alexandra Danilova, Nathalie Krassovsky, Roland Guerard, Marc Platoff, Frederic Franklin and Igor Youskevitch.

"Labyrinth," a ballet in four scenes with settings and costumes by Salvador Dali, choreography by Leonide Massine and music by Franz Schubert (Seventh Symphony); principal dancers, Igor Youskevitch, Tamara Toumanova, Marc Platoff, Lubov Rostova and Milada Mladova.

"Bogatyr," a choreographic legend in four scenes with choreography by Massine, music by Borodin with Alexandra Danilova, Frederic Franklin and Marc Platoff as principal dancers.

Appearing for the first time in Boston in its new version, the newness of which appears to be its blazing decor, "Bogatyr," that warlike tale of a Russian hero who saves his princess from the legendary monster, was the chief item of novelty of the evening at the Opera House, where the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo continues its engagement before enthusiastic audiences.

Considering its blood-and-a-few-peals-of-thunder plot, "Bogatyr" ought to be most exciting. Somehow or other, actually, it doesn't turn out to be very much more thrilling than "Les Sylphides" and not nearly so effective. There seems to be altogether too much doing, but not quite enough, if you follow us. The choreography of the chief characters is colorful and sufficiently primitive, especially in the case of the Mouromitz (vigorously danced by Marc Platoff) and the Tartar Maiden (a fine bit contributed by Lubov Roudenko).

The ensemble work, however, is a little stodgy and not a little untidy, especially as it concerns miming the parts. None of the warriors seemed fierce enough to frighten the Rose in the "Spectre de la Rose," let alone an ogre, and very few of the ensemble conveyed the least emotion. Their reactions, indeed, in the abduction scene, ran the gamut from wan smiles to wide grins. There's nothing basically wrong with "Bogatyr," but it does need a little more conviction on the part of the dancers.

On second sight, "Labyrinth" wears rather well. You get more out

of it; its action develops more clearly, its best parts look better and its weak parts look stronger. The final scene remains by far the most effective. It still seems to be in the process of evolution, for a number of improvements were in evidence. The principals were given more stage to dance in and, taking it by and large, Massine has clarified many a detail. The first criticism of the work—namely that Dali's decor submerge's Massine's choreography—is not so true now. If it goes on like this, "Labyrinth" might well remain in the repertoire since it is not so unwieldy as the far more effective "Bacchanale." Igor Youskevitch and Tamara Toumanova again dancing the central roles, were especially fine in the final love scene.

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Marie went, alone — Nov. 6, 1941





TWO SETS BY SALVADOR DALÍ FOR "LABYRINTH"





LEONIDE MASSINE, *Artistic Director*

Maurice Seymour, Chicago

ALEXANDRA DANILOVA



*Synopses of Ballets*

*with revisions by IRVING DEAKIN*

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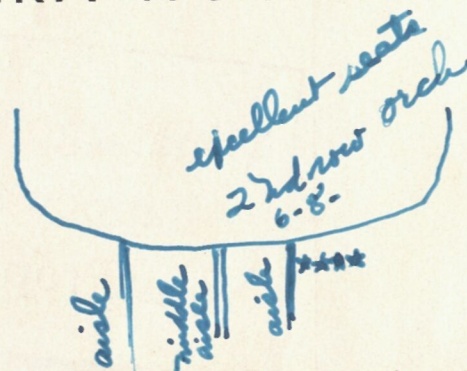
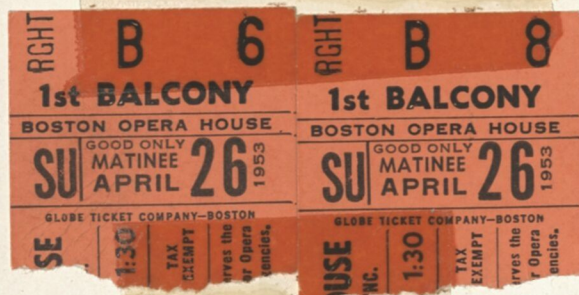


Maurice Seymour, Chicago

ALEXANDRA DANILOVA



# BOSTON OPERA HOUSE



# METROPOLITAN OPERA

— NINETEEN FIFTY - THREE



**FAREWELL FOR A YEAR**—Eleanor Steber, Metropolitan Opera soprano, asks her Lohengrin, tenor Brian Sullivan, when the next swan boat departs for his home among the gods. Miss Steber played Elsa yesterday in the Met's final performance here of "Lohengrin," in which Sullivan came to her aid on a swan.



# Boston Opera House

DIRECTION - MESSRS. LEE and J. J. SHUBERT

Sunday Afternoon, April 26, 1953, at 1:30

## LOHENGRIN

Opera in three acts

by Richard Wagner

Conductor: Fritz Stiedry

Staged by Dino Yannopoulos

Decor re-designed by Charles Elson

King Henry .....	Dezso Ernster
Lohengrin .....	Brian Sullivan
Elsa of Brabant .....	Eleanor Steber - P
Telramund .....	Sigurd Bjoerling
Ortrud .....	Margaret Harshaw - E
The King's herald .....	Frank Guarrera
Nobles .....	{ Paul Franke Gabor Carelli Algerd Brazis Norman Scott

Chorus Master.....Kurt Adler

Assistant Chorus Master.....Walter Taussig

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Program continued on the next page

### The Opera

#### OPERA HOUSE 'Lohengrin'

An opera in three acts by Richard Wagner. Staged by Dino Yannopoulos. Decor re-designed by Charles Elson. Conducted by Fritz Stiedry at the Opera House yesterday afternoon with the following cast:  
King Henry.....Dezso Ernster  
Lohengrin.....Brian Sullivan  
Elsa of Brabant.....Eleanor Steber  
Telramund.....Sigurd Bjoerling  
Ortrud.....Margaret Harshaw  
The King's Herald.....Frank Guarrera  
Nobles.....Paul Franke, Gabor Carelli, Algerd Brazis, Norman Scott.

#### By ROBERT TAYLOR

The Met has gone to the trouble of scouring the rust stains away from the armor of "Lohengrin"—with the result that the Swan Knight now resembles Sir Galahad more than Don Quixote. Yesterday afternoon he stepped out of his feathered carriage into new sets and costumes by Charles Elson, and a generally handsome show as the company closed its local season by offering the only Wagnerian opera of the week.

This was a good if not an un-

usual performance, but it was distinguished by its bright decor as well as by its singing. It is now possible to enjoy the work for its pageantry whenever the score, for all its beauty and indisputable genius, threatens to become interminable. "Lohengrin" is grand opera at its best and worst simultaneously: at once ponderous, dull and absurd while at the same time it has grandeur, inspiration and penetration far beyond the means of any other medium. No master of stagecraft despite his reputation, Wagner gave much of it to the orchestra; yet shaking the dust off the sight effects literally gives it a third dimension.

Prince Henry's place of judgment is now a raised stone beside a huge blasted stump in a rather unfortunate first-act setting which has a group of pennons dangling at stage left to hamper the exits and entrances of processions. In the second and third acts, however, Mr. Elson's designs reflect medieval splendor, especially atmospheric in the low-key lighting of the castle courtyard and in the bridal chamber hung with Byzantine drapes over a simple nuptial couch.

Having gone to the trouble of burnishing up the helmets, greaves and bucklers of the company, it would seem that a little more care could be taken with the direction. The swordplay is still as inept as ever, dust flies as somebody smites a shield, the grouping of the chorus is often clumsy and has characters tripping over costumes and weapons. While "Lohengrin" has improved sight-wise, it still needs fluidity of action.

But little fault can be found with the quality of the vocal production. Brian Sullivan has a clear, ringing tenor as he passes through the series of noble posturings which form the essence of the role. Eleanor Steber's Elsa was a little more than a sweet young thing, bringing out some of the wayward aspects of the Brabanter; her invocation to the night breeze in Act II was memorable, indeed. Margaret Harshaw comes off best as Ortrud, menacing of mien and utterly convincing vocally, while Sigurd Bjoerling did equally well as Telramund.

Poor  
Excellent

Charles 1st opera - Apr. 26, 1953  
Clark, Maple, Dorothy Kennedy, & Maria



Merle and Marie - Boston

# Boston Opera House

DIRECTION - MESSRS. LEE and J. J. SHUBERT

Friday Evening, April 30, 1954, at 8:00

New Production

## TANNHAEUSER

Opera in three acts

by Richard Wagner

Conductor: Max Rudolf

Staged by Herbert Graf

Decor and Costumes by Rolf Gerard

Landgraf Hermann	Jerome Hines
Tannhaeuser	Ramon Vinay
Wolfram von Eschenbach	George London
Walther von der Vogelweide	Brian Sullivan
Biterolf	Clifford Harvuot
Heinrich der Schreiber	Paul Franke
Reinmar von Zweter	Norman Scott
Elisabeth, the Landgraf's niece	Margaret Harshaw
Venus	Astrid Varnay
A young shepherd	Heidi Krall

Chorus Master ..... Kurt Adler

Associate Chorus Master ..... Walter Taussig

## OPERA

### Excellent "Tannhaeuser" With Harshaw and Vinay

"Tannhaeuser," opera with text and music by Richard Wagner. Presented by the Metropolitan Opera Association of New York, at the Boston Opera House, Conducted by Max Rudolf. Staged by Herbert Graf. Settings and costumes by Rolf Gerard. The cast: Landgraf Hermann Lubomir Vichonov, Tannhaeuser Ramon Vinay, Wolfram von Eschenbach George London, Walther von der Vogelweide, Brian Sullivan, Biterolf Clifford Harvuot, Heinrich der Schreiber Paul Franke, Reinmar von Zweter Norman Scott, Elisabeth Margaret Harshaw, Venus Astrid Varnay, Shepherd Heidi Krall.

By CYRUS DURGIN

From a tepid beginning, last night's "Tannhaeuser" soon developed into a performance of power, richness and eloquence, in the main sung and played expertly and with admirable Wagner style. As a production, this is one of the Metropolitan's finest restagings, and the new settings of Rolf Gerard do him credit.

None of the principals had sung this opera in Boston before. There was, accordingly, much interest in the Elisabeth of Miss Harshaw, the Tannhaeuser of Ramon Vinay, the Landgraf of Lubomir Vichonov, the Venus of Astrid Varnay and the Wolfram of George London. In each case the standard of vocal work and that of acting was decidedly superior.

It is a little ironic that as Miss Harshaw has ascended from contralto roles, her voice has gained the soprano brilliance and the bright quality essential to Elisabeth, while Miss Varnay, going down in the tonal range, has not acquired the darker coloring of tone for Venus. Miss Harshaw's work was all finesse and beauty, superbly phrased and in every measure truly sung. Miss Varnay acquitted herself well enough, but her voice does not now have the timbre to make the music written for Venus sound as seductive as it ought to be. It is not a matter of musicianship, for Miss Varnay is an earnest and devoted artist, but a matter of sheer sound. Nonetheless she looked quite alluring as the Queen of Love.

Mr. Vinay, now a dramatic tenor of great power, is splendidly equipped for the title part. His voice rings and has seeming enormous reserves of strength. I cannot remember ever hearing the narrative of the third act sung so expressively.

In musical respects, the role of Wolfram is one long romanza, and that is precisely how George London dealt with it. There were some places where the rhythm could have been a little firmer, the attacks more bold, but through the evening the velvety London voice and the finesse of his singing counted heavily in the total fine effect. Mr. Vichonov, substituting at the last minute for Jerome Hines, who was said to be

ill, was a resonant and musical Landgraf, and since his bass is not of the sluggish or unwieldy sort, for once we had a Hermann who delivered the part expressively.

The exterior settings are simple and highly stylized, minimizing the impression of wooded heights and verdant valley that Wagner had in mind, but suitable. Mr. Gerard might have put more Autumn colors in that for the third act; it suggests too much a blasted heath in its dark sombreness. But the boldly designed Hall of the Wartburg, part stylized, part literal and of a soft gray which makes a splendid background for the multi-colored costumes, is one of the best things Mr. Gerard has done. His design, furthermore, has permitted Herbert Graf to make an easy and natural flow of movement across the stage.

Mr. Rudolf's conducting was scholarly and progressively more intense. He seems, however, to incline toward a minimum of cues and gestures, and there were occasions when the man who wrote an admirable book on conducting, could have helped the ensemble enormously with just a little more incisive use of his stick. In Heidi Krall, who took the small part of the Shepherd, the Metropolitan has a superb, fresh young soprano who sounds very musical, indeed.

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Milano, Italy - May 10, 1965

May, 1965

# Simon Boccanegra

Melodramma in un prologo e tre atti di  
Francesco M. Piave

Musica di  
Giuseppe Verdi

☆

Prima rappresentazione: 7 maggio 1965

TEATRO alla SCALA

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A CURA DELL'UFFICIO STAMPA DELL'E. A. TEATRO ALLA SCALA

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ARCHETIPOGRAFIA DI MILANO S.P.A. - VIALE UMBRIA 54



Milano, Italy - May 10, 1965

## introduzione

**I**l primo dei due *Simon Boccanegra* verdiani, quello dovuto alla verseggiatura del Piave qua e là segretamente ritoccata dal Somma ma non ancora revisionata dal Boito, cade alla Fenice di Venezia il 12 marzo 1857<sup>1)</sup>. Per gli amici di Verdi il capitombolo è frutto degli intrighi di un partito avversario, organizzato in piena regola, manovrato da certo Samuele Levi « dell'antica tribù ». Per i nemici l'insuccesso è meritato perché la musica è decisamente brutta e perché i versi del libretto, anche peggiori, sono dovuti, piuttosto che al Piave, allo stesso musicista, impostosi di prepotenza alla testa di legno del librettista ufficiale.

Verdi, al solito, non se ne dà eccessivo pensiero. Conosce le mormorazioni pettegole perché gli vengono scrupolosamente riferite (una volta coinvolgendo la responsabilità diretta del Piave e allora perderà le staffe), ma si limita in un primo tempo a starsene zitto, forse forse compiaciuto in quanto non può non riflettere alla recente, clamorosa rivincita della *Traviata* sul terreno medesimo della disfatta boccanegrina. Costretto a Venezia dagli obblighi contrattuali, se ne resta pacifico sulla laguna fino alla replica dello spettacolo. Informa un amico del « fiasco »: « Credeva di aver fatto qualche cosa di passabile ma pare che mi sia sbagliato. Vedremo in seguito chi avrà torto ». E riparte per



la sua Sant'Agata. Sereno, sí, però risoluto a non presentare altre opere nuove, dopo la quinta ch'era il *Boccanegra*, all'ingrato pubblico della Fenice.

A piú d'un secolo di distanza dal memorabile « fiasco » il giudizio sul libretto e la musica di questo primo *Boccanegra*, piú o meno conservati nel secondo letterariamente riveduto da Arrigo Boito e musicalmente rimpastato da Verdi per l'edizione scaligera del 1881<sup>2)</sup>, viene abbastanza semplice. È giudizio, per quanto riguarda il libretto ricavato da un omonimo dramma di quel Gutierrez cui si deve la trama anche del *Trovatore*, che potrebbe investire la quasi totalità dei melodrammi soggetti a leggi specialissime. Per tali leggi, ciò che non aveva escogitato di suo la romantica fantasia dello scrittore spagnolo, l'avevan aggiunto di loro il Verdi estensore d'un abbozzo di sceneggiatura rifinito nei minimi particolari, il Piave abile aggiustatore di rime e il Somma chiamato in rincalzo dal musicista. N'era provenuta una impossibile storia romanzesca a sfondo politico-amoroso e con personaggi, escluso Simone, debolmente caratterizzati. Una storia, oltre tutto, che lo stesso Verdi avrebbe definito da sé « troppo triste e desolante », anche se un forte elemento morale, l'evocazione delle lotte intestine che mettevano una contro l'altra le città italiane trecentesche e che avrebbero dovuto risvegliare l'orrore delle guerre fratricide, stava alla sua base. Fu questo elemento morale, peraltro, che incoraggiò il maestro a tener duro in Venezia alle ottuse pretese della censura austriaca e alle pavidie obiezioni della presidenza della Fenice. E sarà ancora questa specie di 'idea-madre' del melodramma che spingerà l'autore, piú di vent'anni dopo, a rinforzare la tela del *Boccanegra* e a convincerlo che, posta nelle mani d'un poeta di statura diversa dalla piavesca, l'opera avrebbe potuto ambire a sorte meno cattiva di quella fattale subire dai veneziani al suo apparire, dai milanesi due anni dopo.

Altrettanto facile, se non piú semplice, il giudizio sulla infornata partitura musicale, che tradisce l'anelito dell'operista verso un sostanziale rinnovamento delle forme e un intenzionale ribaltamento degli schemi. In questo senso *Simon Boccanegra* entra nel novero delle partiture sperimentali, o se piace di piú, intellettualistiche. Obbedisce alla volontà di fare diverso altre



Milano, Italy - May 10, 1965

volte manifestata dal compositore ai librettisti. Si pone accanto al *Macbeth*, per intenderci, e ai *Vespri siciliani* precedenti il *Boccanegra* e pure attestanti la sete di potenza drammatica e certo marginale gusto delle allucinanti, grandiose visioni spettacolari. Infine avvia al *Don Carlos*, coronante i poderosi sforzi evolutivi nei giorni stessi che il musicista è maturo per le conquiste dell'*Aida*, della *Messa di requiem*, dell'*Otello*. Ma, quanto e più di quelle che la precedono o seguono, del tipo tendente a liberarsi dalle formule convenzionali, la partitura del *Boccanegra* offre non di meno un'alternativa sconcertante d'illuminazioni geniali e di oscuramenti, di scandagli psicologici profondi e di ingenue velleità descrittive.

Si capisce. Verdi intravedeva sicuramente le mete ultime cui accennerà nel '59 al critico Filippi dopo l'esito negativo del primo *Boccanegra* alla Scala. Egli, a modo suo, presentiva il mondo di sentimenti, concetti e dottrine che stava nascendo intorno a lui e che da una decina d'anni si veniva concretando nei climi nordici di Dresda, Weimar e Zurigo. Però quel mondo, appena indovinato da un maestro latino affatto digiuno delle teorie filosofiche di Schopenhauer, in realtà inquietava più che nonallettasse Verdi. Era e non era il suo. Lo avvicinava ad esso la sete di verità drammatica aderente e viva. Ne lo dirottavano l'istinto e l'orgoglio, e più la coscienza dei limiti e delle peculiarità elargiti da natura ad artisti di latitudini diverse, di cultura e d'educazione diversissime. Verdi, che era e restava « paesano delle Roncole », e se ne vantava, sentiva di dover uscire dal vecchio seminato d'un melodramma che gli aveva pur dato la gloria, ma sapeva ancora di doversi incamminare verso lidi completamente stranieri a quelli cui approdava il germanico Wagner.

Lotta senza quartiere nell'intimo d'una personalità gigantesca, purtroppo condotta sopra un terreno poco propizio alla risoluzione dei problemi di forma e di tecnica com'erano in definitiva quelli assillanti il creatore del *Simon Boccanegra*. Intanto è oscura la ragione vera per cui il maestro sentì il bisogno di dare il suono a un siffatto argomento. Disse alcuno che l'idea



gli venne dopo ascoltata una recita della *Congiura dei Fieschi* di Schiller, ma egli stesso smentì tale ipotesi. Forse ve lo indusse il fascino dell'antica storia genovese, più probabilmente lo decise il carattere fiero e magnanimo di un doge d'origine popolana, trascinato nel vortice della politica faziosa cui era avverso. Un doge che soprattutto era padre, e padre non meno sventurato dei tanti che popolano l'operistica verdiana dall'*Oberto* al *Nabucco*, dai *Foscari* ai *Masnadieri*, dalla *Miller* al *Rigoletto*, alla *Traviata*, per non dire del *Re Lear* che ossessionò per decenni la mente di Verdi, tormentata dalle difficoltà di centrare drammaticamente, appunto, la figura del re-padre.

A questo proposito risultano comunque illuminanti entrambe le partiture, del primo e secondo *Boccanegra*. Poiché in esse il sentimento del doge-padre, angosciato dalla volubilità della plebe e dalla vigliaccheria di chi tenta di colpirlo negli affetti più teneri, domina da cima a fondo con l'espansa vigoria d'un lirismo realistico tra i più toccanti della tavolozza verdiana. Già nella stesura primiera il personaggio del doge sovrasta su tutti: sullo stesso Paolo vendicativo e brutale, che adombra vagamente i tratti morali e fisionomici del futuro Jago, sullo stesso Fiesco irriducibile, nonostante gli siano destinate le parole che tanto piacquero al musicista, "Delle faci festanti al barlume", da ultimo sui debolmente rilevati Amelia e Gabriele, rimasti un po' fuori dalla virile passionalità del protagonista.

Ma è nella stesura definitiva, giustamente ripresa nell'edizione attuale, che Simone riesce anche più alto e statuario, quasi isolato in rapporto a quanti lo circondano. Giova alla sua grandezza il progressivo raffinamento della strumentazione, e basterebbe citare, con il tremulo patos dell'invocazione al mare, il cromatismo orchestrale descrivente l'azione del veleno propinato dal rivoltoso Paolo. Gli giova inoltre la risoluta attenuazione dell'enfasi vociante in palcoscenico, e per converso l'imponente scena del Consiglio nel palazzo degli Abati, consigliata a Boito, tramite Giulio Ricordi, da un Verdi che ricordava la parte avuta da Petrarca nelle lotte fra genovesi e veneziani, e le invocazioni del poeta ai rispettivi dogi per una pace tra i figli d'una stessa madre.

Nel pensiero di Verdi la scena del Consiglio doveva sugge-



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rire gli spunti drammatici per esprimersi con forme musicali anche più nuove delle già tentate. E li offre, di fatto, in quanto concedono al compositore d'uscirsene dai vincoli del concertato tradizionale e di coniare lo stampo d'una declamazione melodica fatta poi servire nell'*Otello*, a quel modo che serviranno all'*Otello* l'attenta revisione dei vecchi recitativi e d'alcune viete formule d'accompagnamento, sensibilmente ammodernati o addirittura fatti sparire nella seconda versione dell'opera. Certo da questa sola scena, anche se magnifica e specialmente indicata a evidenziare la figura centrale del dramma, non poteva l'intera partitura ricavare l'impulso d'una ripristinata vita organica e artisticamente unitaria. Vi si opponeva sempre l'incombente tetraggine d'un dramma intessuto d'amori stravaganti, istoriato di rapimenti, tradimenti, veleni apprestati e minacciati con estrema disinvoltura. Dramma, ancorché nobilitato dal sentimento d'una patria unita e concorde in epoca oscura, essenzialmente « politico, non drammatico », come opinava l'autore quando ancora s'illudeva che « un uomo d'ingegno avrebbe potuto ben drammatizzare questo fatto ».

Tuttavia l'importanza del rifatto *Simon Boccanegra*, anche sul piano artistico, resta fondamentale. Poiché, concepita la riforma principale del libretto, accanto al proposito di fare opera più densa di contenuto civile, aveva premuto su Verdi l'altra considerazione ch'egli aveva già sul tavolo i versi boitiani dell'*Otello*. Gli accennati problemi di forma e di tecnica ch'egli sentiva di dover affrontare quando si fosse deciso a musicare l'*Otello*, imponevano fin d'ora una preparazione da lui medesimo definita « professionale ». In altre parole, lasciare da parte per il momento la tremenda opera scespiriana e accingersi al rifacimento del *Boccanegra*, significò per il maestro divenire padrone del linguaggio indispensabile a tradurre nei suoni la tragedia del moro. Di qui l'importanza del rifacimento che, a parte la condotta dei recitativi riveduti e il magistero di un'orchestrazione in parecchi punti radicalmente trasformata, risulta anzitutto dalla detta potente scena del Consiglio.



Introdotta a occupare il secondo quadro del primo atto nella versione riveduta, è da questa scena che si riverbera la luce rivelatrice di tutto il Verdi a venire. Essa che accentua la voce foriera d'un rinnovato orientamento e dà esca alle armonie e ai ritmi inusitati, mentre l'esortazione di Petrarca echeggia nel dominatore canto dogale: "E vo gridando pace - E vo gridando amor!".

Franco Abbiati

1) Con Leone Giraldoni, Simone, cantavano Luigia Bendazzi, il tenore Carlo Negrini, il basso Vercellini. Ancora la Bendazzi, il tenore Emilio Pancani, il baritono Sebastiano Ronconi e il basso Raffaele Laterza furono gli interpreti nella prima milanese di due anni dopo (24 gennaio 1859: la famosa sera in cui al grido di Viva Verdi echeggiato nella sala del Piermarini fu attribuito, in quel clima di trepida vigilia risorgimentale, una patriottica allusione a Vittorio Emanuele Re D'Italia).

2) Il cartellone della Scala per il carnevale-quaresima 1881 annunciava tre opere solamente: *Il Figliuol prodigo* di Ponchielli, *Ruy Blas* di Marchetti, *Ernani* di Verdi, e aggiungeva: « Le altre saranno indicate in seguito ». Fra « le altre » fu questo secondo e definitivo *Simon Boccanegra*, messo in scena dallo stesso Verdi (24 marzo): Franco Faccio era il direttore, Victor Maurel il protagonista, Anna D'Angeri Maria-Amelia, Tamagno l'Adorno, Edoardo De Reszké il Fiesco. L'ultima apparizione dell'opera è del 1955-56, direttore Francesco Molinari Pradelli, regista Mario Frigerio, scene e costumi di Nicola Benois (nuovamente impiegati nell'attuale edizione), nelle parti principali Annamaria Rovere, Carlo Bergonzi, Aldo Protti e Cesare Siepi.



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## argomento

**Prologo.** Piazza di Genova. Nel fondo la chiesa di San Lorenzo, a destra il palazzo dei Fieschi. Notte. I genovesi Paolo Albiani orfice e Pietro popolano, in odio ai patrizi decidono di eleggere doge, e se occorre con la violenza, Simon Boccanegra, "corsaro al servizio della Repubblica". Simone accetta con la speranza di strappare all' "empio ostello" dei Fieschi la donna che vi geme prigioniera e che egli ha amato avendone una bimba, di cui nulla sa dopo la sua misteriosa scomparsa. La donna è una Fieschi figlia di Jacopo, che ha disonorato la famiglia: da ciò la sua segregazione. Tornata deserta la piazza, il nobile Jacopo Fiesco esce dal palazzo dove la figlia peccatrice è morta. S'incontra con Simone, cui rimprovera l'oltraggio ma tace la sciagura. Simone chiede inutilmente perdono: lo otterrebbe soltanto a patto ch'egli consegnasse al Fiesco il frutto del suo amore con la patrizia; ma egli non può, egli crede perduto quel frutto dopo la sua scomparsa. Jacopo lo lascia solo e Simone, tentato di vedere la donna amata e prigioniera, entra nel palazzo. La trova cadavere. In quella Paolo, Pietro e il "popolo d'ambo i sessi con fiaccole accese", irrompono nella piazza acclamando Simone doge. "Una tomba...", grida questi. "Un trono!...", risponde Paolo. "Doge Simon?... m'arde l'inferno in petto!", commenta il Fiesco.

**Atto primo.** Giardino dei Grimaldi fuori Genova, di fronte al mare. Spunta l'aurora. Amelia Grimaldi, sotto il cui nome si nasconde la figlia naturale di Simone, Maria Boccanegra, si trova segretamente con il fidanzato Gabriele Adorno, gentiluomo genovese che ha per rivale d'amore Paolo Albiani. Già nel duetto che ne segue è fatto cenno velatamente alla congiura dei patrizi genovesi, tra cui sono



Gabriele Adorno e Jacopo Fiesco, celato questo sotto il nome di Andrea, intesi ad abbattere Simone. Ma arriva il popolano Pietro che annuncia una imminente visita del doge in casa Grimaldi. Gabriele è interdetto. Amelia gli comunica che la visita ha il solo scopo di chiedere "sua destra" per altro favorito dogale e lo invita a farsi avanti per tempo. Va Gabriele in cerca di Andrea (Jacopo Fiesco), mentre Amelia rientra a palazzo; e subito lo incontra e gli chiede di consentire al matrimonio suo con Amelia. Andrea consente, spiegando però che "alto mistero sulla vergine incombe", e che Amelia non è una Grimaldi bensì un'orfana d'umili origini. Ma "ecco il Doge: partiam". Ora sono in giardino il doge e Paolo col seguito. Il doge avvicina Amelia promettendo pace ai nemici Grimaldi patrizi e auspicando all'unione dell'ospite gentile con Paolo Albiani. Dalle confidenze di Amelia, che gli dice non essere una Grimaldi ma un'orfana, e dal ritratto d'una donna che già aveva in custodia la fanciulla sulla marina di Pisa, egli scopre in lei la figlia scomparsa venticinque anni prima. Si abbracciano commossi. A Paolo, sopraggiunto quando la fanciulla è rientrata nelle stanze, impone di rinunciare a ogni speranza, poi segue la figlia ritrovata. Paolo e Pietro progettano allora di rapire Amelia e di nasconderla nell'abitazione di Lorenzino usuriere.

Le ultime scene si svolgono nella sala del Consiglio del Palazzo degli Abati. Dal seggio ducale, alla presenza dei consiglieri, Simone tratta degli affari di Stato quando s'ode un crescente rumore di tumulto dalla piazza dei Fieschi. Tra grida di viva e morte al doge, irrompe il popolo trascinando seco Gabriele e Andrea, i quali avevano ucciso l'usuriere Lorenzino ritenuto colpevole d'aver rapito Amelia. Prima di morire Lorenzino stava svelando il nome dell'uomo "poscente" che l'aveva spinto al crimine. Gabriele pensa si tratti non di Paolo, ma dello stesso doge, e accusandolo di ratto cerca di colpirlo col pugnale. Amelia, che nel frattempo è riuscita a fuggire, entra in quel punto e si interpone dichiarando l'innocenza di Simone e invocando da lui il perdono di Gabriele. Paolo, ancora insospettato, salvo che da Amelia, medita nuove vendette.

**Atto secondo.** Stanza del doge nel palazzo ducale. Andrea e Gabriele, prigionieri per una notte, vengono tratti alla presenza di Paolo, che confida loro di odiare a sua volta il "tiranno" e propone a entrambi di trucidarlo. Il Fiesco rifiuta e ritorna in carcere. L'Adorno si trattiene. A lui Paolo dice che anche Amelia è nel palazzo e "del vegliardo è segno alle infami dilettezze". Duro scontro tra Gabriele e Amelia che, accusata dal giovane, non può svelare il segreto della paternità



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di Simone. Il quale entra mentre Gabriele si nasconde sul poggiolo e assiste di là, furiosamente ingelosito, a un episodio di tenerezza tra Amelia e il padre, cui "ardone le fauci" (ma questa è una variante di Boito) al pensiero che la figlia ami il traditore suo. Poi Simone s'ad-dormenta e per la seconda volta Adorno, uscito dal nascondiglio, tenta di pugnalarlo. Ancora si interpone Amelia e finalmente il doge - era tempo - confessa a Gabriele Adorno d'essere genitore alla fanciulla. Fuori continua la sommossa.

**Atto terzo.** Interno del palazzo ducale. Viene ridata libertà al Fiesco ma è tratto in catene Paolo, condannato al supplizio perché colto tra i rivoltosi con l'armi in pugno. Un coro dall'interno indica che si stanno celebrando le nozze di Amelia e Gabriele. Paolo fremente ma sa che la vendetta non tarderà a venire poiché egli ha fatto in tempo ad avvelenare Simone. In un successivo colloquio tra il Fiesco e Simone, questi rivela che Amelia Grimaldi, l'orfanella, è in realtà Maria Boccanegra, la figlia della Fiesco da lui amata in gioventù. Jacopo trasalisce, desolato di perdonare troppo tardi all'antico seduttore della sua creatura. Nell'ultima scena, con intervento degli sposi novelli, Simone muore, dopo avere additato nell'Adorno il successore. Maria Fieschi Boccanegra in Adorno piange insieme, doppiamente intenerita, la morte del padre e la scoperta del nonno materno. "Lenti e gravi tocchi di campana. Tutti s'inginocchiano".

(da Giuseppe Verdi di Franco Abbiati,  
vol. II, G. Ricordi & C. Editori, 1959)

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**Prologue.** La scène se passe à Gênes, la nuit, devant l'Eglise de Saint Laurent. A droite, le palais des Fieschi. Deux génois, Paolo Albani, orfèvre, et Pietro, homme du peuple, décident de nommer doge Simon Boccanegra, "corsaire au service de la République". Ceci en haine de la noblesse et même s'il leur faudra recourir à la violence. Simon accepte dans l'espoir d'arracher à "la cruelle demeure" des Fieschi la jeune femme qu'il aime et qui lui a donné une fille dont il ne sait plus rien depuis sa mystérieuse disparition. La jeune femme est une Fieschi, fille de Jacopo. Son amour pour Simon et la naissance de leur enfant a déshonoré la famille et a été la cause de sa ségrégation. Jacopo Fiesco sort du palais où sa fille pécheresse vient de mourir. Il rencontre Simon qui lui demande pardon, mais en vain, car pour l'obtenir il devrait remettre aux Fieschi le fruit de son amour pour la jeune patricienne, qu'il croit perdu depuis sa disparition. Jacopo s'éloigne et Simon pénètre dans le palais, dans l'espoir de revoir sa bien-aimée prisonnière. Il la retrouve morte. Paolo, Pietro et une foule nombreuse font irruption dans le palais et proclament Simon doge. "Un tombeau!" crie Simon. "Un trône!" lui répond Paolo. Et Jacopo Fiesco: "Doge Simon? L'enfer m'embrase le cœur".



**Premier acte.** Dans le jardin des Grimaldi, aux portes de Gênes, face à la mer. A l'aube, Amelia Grimaldi, qui n'est autre que la fille naturelle de Simon, Maria Boccanegra, rencontre en secret son fiancé Gabriele Adorno, gentilhomme génois, dont le rival en amour est Paolo Albiani. Leur duetto nous apprend le complot que trament les nobles génois, parmi lesquels Gabriele Adorno lui-même et Jacopo Fiesco, qui se cache sous le nom d'Andrea, pour renverser Simon. Pietro survient et annonce l'imminente visite du doge. Gabriele est interdit. Amelia l'informe que cette visite n'a pour objet que de demander sa main pour un favori du doge et qu'il ferait bien de devancer les événements. Amelia s'éloigne et Gabriele part à la recherche d'Andrea (Jacopo Fiesco), qu'il rencontre aussitôt et auquel il demande de consentir à son mariage avec Amelia. Andrea accepte, mais explique qu'un « mystère entoure la jeune vierge » et qu'Amelia n'est pas une Grimaldi, mais une orpheline d'humble naissance. Les deux hommes s'éloignent à l'annonce de l'arrivée du doge, qui est accompagné de Paolo et de sa suite. Simon s'approche d'Amelia. Il promet la paix aux ennemis Grimaldi et exprime son désir de la voir mariée à Paolo Albiani. Lorsqu'Amelia lui confie de ne pas être une Grimaldi, mais orpheline, il se souvient de la description que lui fit de son enfant une femme qui l'eut en garde à Pise et reconnaît en elle sa propre fille. Ils s'embrassent avec émotion. Le doge ordonne aussitôt à Paolo de renoncer à ses espoirs et s'éloigne avec sa fille. Paolo et Pietro décident alors d'enlever Amelia et de la cacher dans la maison de Lorenzino l'usurier.

Les dernières scènes se déroulent dans la Salle du Conseil, où Simon se trouve en réunion avec ses conseillers. Un bruit de tumulte se lève de Piazza dei Fieschi. Aux cris de vive et à bas le doge, la foule fait irruption. Gabriele et Andrea ont tué l'usurier Lorenzino, accusé d'avoir enlevé Amelia. Avant d'expirer, l'usurier a révélé que le vrai coupable est un « homme puissant ». Gabriele ne soupçonne pas Paolo, mais le doge lui-même. Il l'accuse de l'enlèvement et cherche à le frapper de son poignard, lorsque survient Amelia, qui proclame l'innocence de Simon et demande grâce pour Gabriele. Paolo, que personne ne soupçonne, sauf Amelia, pense déjà à une nouvelle vengeance.

**Deuxième acte.** Dans la chambre du doge, dans le palais ducal. Andrea et Gabriele, prisonniers pour une nuit, sont conduits devant Paolo, qui leur confie de haïr à son tour le « tiran » et leur propose de l'assassiner. Fiesco refuse et retourne dans son cachot. Paolo informe Gabriele qu'Amelia aussi est dans le palais et qu'elle est l'objet des « infâmes plaisirs du vieillard ». Rencontrant ensuite la jeune fille, Gabriele l'accable de reproches, dont Amelia ne sait se défendre, ne pouvant révéler le secret de la paternité de Simon. Ce dernier survient. Gabriele se cache et assiste du balcon, en proie à la plus forte jalousie, à une scène de tendresse entre Amelia et son père, qui exprime sa désapprobation pour l'amour que sa fille nourrit pour un homme qui l'a trahi. Lorsque Simon s'endort, Adorno essaye pour la seconde fois de le poignarder, mais Amelia intervient encore et finalement le doge révèle à Gabriele d'être le père de la jeune fille. Hors du palais, l'émeute continue.

**Troisième acte.** Dans le palais ducal. Fiesco est remis en liberté. Paolo est condamné au supplice, ayant pris part à l'émeute. Il entend les chants qui accompagnent la cérémonie du mariage entre Amelia et Gabriele. Frémissant de rage, il sait pourtant que l'heure de sa vengeance est proche, car il a eu le temps d'empoisonner Simon. Celui-ci vient de révéler à Fiesco qu'Amelia Gri-



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maldi, l'orpheline, est en réalité l'enfant née de son amour pour la jeune femme de la famille de Fieschi. Jacopo tressaille, désolé de ne pouvoir pardonner que trop tard à l'ancien séducteur de sa fille. L'entretien est interrompu par l'arrivée des jeunes époux, qui assistent à la mort de Simon. Avant d'expirer, celui-ci nomme Adorno son successeur. Maria Fieschi Boccanegra pleure en même temps son père mort et son grand-père retrouvé. Au son grave des cloches, tout le monde se met à genoux.

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**Prologue.** A piazza in Genoa. In the background is the church of San Lorenzo, on the right is the palace of the Fiesco family. It is night. Two Genoese, Paolo Albiani a goldsmith and leader of the plebian party and Pietro his associate are discussing the forthcoming election of the Doge. Out of hatred for the nobility they make up their minds that Simone Boccanegra "the Corsair in the service of the Republic" should be elected - if necessary by force. Simone accepts nomination in the hope that as Doge he will be able to bring deliverance to the woman he loves who languishes a prisoner in the "cruel abode" of the Fiesco family. This woman, by whom he has had a child who has since mysteriously disappeared, is the daughter of Jacopo Fiesco. She is kept in confinement because of the dishonour she has brought upon her family. The piazza is empty when Jacopo Fiesco emerges from his palace. His daughter has just died. He meets Simone and reproaches him for the injury he has done him through his daughter but says nothing about her death. Simone asks for forgiveness. Jacopo is willing to forgive only on condition that Simone yields into his care the child his daughter bore him. Simone cannot for the child has disappeared. Jacopo leaves him. When he is alone Simone is overcome with desire to see the woman he loves and he enters the Fiesco palace. He finds her there, dead. At that moment Paolo, Pietro and a crowd of Genoese with lighted torches burst into the piazza hailing Simone as Doge. Simone utters a great cry: "A tomb..." "A throne!" replies Paolo. Apart Jacopo Fiesco comments: "Simone Doge? Hell itself burns in my breast!"

**Act One.** The garden of the Grimaldi Palace by the sea outside Genoa. It is daybreak. Simone's natural daughter, Maria Boccanegra, who goes by the name of Amelia Grimaldi, is keeping tryst with Gabriele Adorno to whom she is secretly betrothed. Gabriele is a member of the Genoese nobility. There is another aspirant to marriage with Amelia: Paolo Albiani. In the lover's duet there is a veiled reference to a plot by the Genoese nobles to overthrow Simone. Both Gabriele Adorno and Jacopo Fiesco are parties to the conspiracy. Jacopo Fiesco has assumed the name of Andrea and is regarded by Amelia as her guardian. Pietro the associate of Paolo arrives with the news that the Doge is on his way to the Grimaldi Palace. Gabriele is nonplussed. Amelia tells him that the only reason the Doge is coming is to ask that she should be given in marriage to his friend Paolo. She urges Gabriele to intervene with her guardian first. While Amelia returns to the palace, Gabriele goes in search of Andrea (Jacopo Fiesco) and quickly finds him. Gabriele asks and is granted consent to marry Amelia, but Andrea tells him at the same time that "a deep mystery surrounds this maiden" and that she is not a Grimaldi but an orphan of humble



birth. But "here comes the Doge, let us away". The Doge and his retinue enter the garden with Paolo. The Doge promises peace to his patrician enemies the Grimaldis and approaching Amelia expresses the hope that she will marry Paolo Albiani. She tells him that she is not a Grimaldi but one who does not know who her parents were. She shows him the portrait of a woman that she has had since she was a child. From this, and from what she has told him, he realizes that she is his daughter who disappeared twenty-five years ago. Deeply moved father and daughter embrace each other. When Amelia has gone to her apartments the Doge requests Paolo to abandon all hope of marrying her, then he enters the palace himself. Paolo and Pietro plan to abduct Amelia and hide her in the house of Lorenzino a usurer.

The final scenes take place in the Council Chamber of the Palazzo degli Abati. From the throne of the Doges, in the presence of his counsellors, Simone is dealing with affairs of state. At a certain moment the sound of rioting is heard from the Piazza dei Fieschi and presently, with conflicting cries of Long Live the Doge and Death to the Doge, the mob burst into the Council Chamber dragging with them Gabriele and Andrea. The two nobles have killed the usurer Lorenzino because they thought he had had Amelia abducted. Before he died Lorenzino tried to name the man "in high position" really responsible for the crime. Gabriele thinks the guilty one Lorenzino intended to name is the Doge and, accusing him of the abduction, attempts to stab him. Amelia who has managed to escape enters in time to place herself between the Doge and his would-be assassin. She declares that Simone is innocent and appeals to him to forgive Gabriele. Paolo, suspected by no one except Amelia, considers another course of revenge.

**Act Two.** The Doge's room in the ducal palace. Andrea and Gabriele who are being held prisoner for a night are brought before Paolo. He confides in them that he too hates "the tyrant" and proposes that they should murder him. Andrea refuses to consider the proposal and returns to his prison. But Gabriele remains. Paolo tells him that Amelia too is in the palace and convinces him that this points to "the old man's harbouring infamous designs". There follows a bitter scene between Gabriele and Amelia. She cannot answer his accusations because she may not disclose that Simone is her father. At the approach of Simone, Gabriele hides on the balcony. From there he watches with mounting jealousy a tender exchange between Amelia and her father who is distressed at the thought that his daughter is in love with a man who has behaved as a traitor towards him. Presently Simone falls asleep and Gabriele emerging from his hiding place tries a second time to kill him. But again Amelia prevents the murder, and now the Doge tells Gabriele - and not before it was time - that he is Amelia's father. Outside there is the noise of riot and insurrection.

**Act Three.** Inside the ducal palace. Fiesco is set free. Paolo is brought in fettered. He is under sentence of death because he was found sword in hand urging on the rebel mob. The singing of a choir within indicates that the marriage of Amelia and Gabriele is being celebrated. Paolo experiences a moment of anguish, but he knows he will have his revenge for he has administered poison to Simone. Simone discloses to Jacopo Fiesco that the supposed orphan Amelia Grimaldi is in reality Maria Boccanegra, the daughter of Jacopo's daughter whom Simone



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loved when he was young. Jacopo is shaken by the revelation. He grieves that his forgiveness of the seducer of his daughter should come so late. In the final scene Simone dies in the presence of the newly wedded Amelia and Gabriele, after nominating Gabriele his successor. Maria Adorno who was born Maria Fieschi Boccanegra weeps for the death of her father and at the emotion of discovering Jacopo to be her grandfather. "Slow sounds the death knell. All kneel".

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**Vorspiel.** Auf einem Platze Genuas. Im Hintergrund die Kirche San Lorenzo, rechts der Palast der Adelsfamilie Fiesco. Es ist Nacht. Paolo Albiani und Pietro, beide Anhänger der Volkspartei, beschliessen, bei der bevorstehenden Dogenwahl für Simone Boccanegra, "Korsar in Diensten der Republik Genua", zu stimmen und seine Wahl notfalls mit Gewalt zu erzwingen. Simone zeigt zunächst wenig Neigung, das Amt des Dogen anzunehmen, erklärt sich aber schliesslich bereit, nachdem man ihm bedeutet, der adelsstolze Fiesco werde einem Dogen die Hand seiner Tochter Maria nicht verweigern. Maria, die Geliebte Simones, wird seit ihrem "Fehltritt" - sie hat inzwischen eine Tochter geboren - von ihrem Vater im Palast der Familie eingeschlossen. Nachdem der Platz sich wieder geleert hat, tritt Fiesco aus dem Palast, in dem seine Tochter vor wenigen Stunden gestorben ist. Er verschweigt dies jedoch Simone Boccanegra, der ihn um Vergebung bittet, bleibt unerbittlich und fordert zur Sühne des Verbrechens an seiner Tochter das Kind heraus. Simone gesteht, dass es geraubt wurde und seitdem verschollen ist. Als Boccanegra in den Palast Fiescos eindringt, um Maria zu befreien, muss er sich überzeugen, dass die Geliebte vor wenigen Stunden gestorben ist. Im selben Augenblick stürmen Paolo und Pietro und eine aufgeregte Volksmenge mit brennenden Fackeln auf den Platz, um Genuas neuem Dogen Simone zu huldigen. "Ein Grab..." schreit Simone verzweifelt. "Ein Thron..." lautet die Antwort Paolos. Während Fiesco kommentiert: "Doge Simon?... die Hölle brennt in meiner Brust!".

**Erster Akt.** Im Garten der Grimaldis unweit von Genua am Meer. Morgendämmerung. Amelia Grimaldi, die uneheliche Tochter Simones, deren wahrer Name Maria Boccanegra ist, trifft sich heimlich mit dem jungen Genueser Edelmann Gabriele Adorno, dem ihr Herz gehört. Auch Paolo Albiani wirbt um ihre Hand. Im folgenden Duett ist die Verschwörung des Adels gegen den Dogen Simone, die vor allem von Gabriele Adorno und dem unter dem Namen Andrea auftretenden Jacopo Fiesco betrieben wird, bereits angedeutet. Es erscheint Pietro, Anhänger der Volkspartei, um den Besuch des Dogen anzukündigen. Gabriele kann seine Verwunderung darüber nicht verbergen, aber Amelia beruhigt ihn: sie nimmt an, Genuas Herrscher komme als Brautwerber für einen seiner Günstlinge. Gabriele begibt sich zu Andrea (Jacopo Fiesco) und hält um Amelias Hand an. Fiesco hält ihm entgegen, Amelia stamme nicht aus dem Geschlecht der Grimaldi, sondern sei ein angenommenes Waisenkind aus dem Volke. Mit Paolo und seinem Gefolge erscheint der Doge im Garten. Er kommt mit der Absicht, sich mit den verfeindeten Grimaldis zu versöhnen und bittet Amelia, sich Paolo Albiani anzuvermählen. Amelia fasst Vertrauen zu Simone und



erzählt ihm ihr Leben, sie zeigt ihm ein Bild ihrer Amme und so kann es für Simone keinen Zweifel mehr geben, dass er nach fünfundzwanzig Jahren die verlorengelaubte Tochter wiedergefunden hat. Bewegt fallen sich Vater und Tochter in die Arme. Dem herbeieilenden Paolo gibt Simone zu verstehen, er möge alle Hoffnung auf Amelias Hand aufgeben. Wütend beschliesst dieser mit Pietro, das Mädchen gewaltsam zu entführen und bei Lorenzino zu verbergen.

Die folgende Szene spielt im Ratssaal des Palazzo Abati, wo Simone mit dem versammelten Senat dringende Staatsgeschäfte erledigt, als sich Lärm aus der Richtung des Palastes der Fieschi erhebt. Man schleppt Fiesco und Adorno herein, der offen bekennt, Amelias Entführer Lorenzino getötet zu haben. Sterbend habe dieser gestanden, nur das Werkzeug eines mächtigeren Willens gewesen zu sein. In der Annahme, Boccanegra sei der Anstifter gewesen, will Adorno sich auf Simone stürzen. Aber Amelia, der die Flucht gelungen ist, tritt im selben Augenblick dazwischen. Sie beteuert die Unschuld Simones und bittet Gabriele Adorno, das Vorgefallene zu verzeihen. Obwohl sie weiss, dass Paolo der Schuldige ist, nennt sie seinen Namen nicht. Dieser sinnt jedoch bereits wieder auf neue Rache.

**Zweiter Akt.** Arbeitszimmer Simones im Palast des Dogen. Andrea und Gabriele, die für diese Nacht gefangengenommen wurden, werden vor Paolo geführt, der versucht, sie zum Mord an Boccanegra anzustiften. Während Fiesco ablehnt und wieder in seinen Kerker zurückgebracht wird, versteht Paolo es durch den Hinweis, Amelia sei die Geliebte des Dogen gewesen, Gabrieles Eifersucht derart zu schüren, dass dieser sich schliesslich zur Tat bereit erklärt. In der folgenden Szene wird Amelia von Adorno mit bitteren Vorwürfen überschüttet. Vergebens beteuert sie ihre Unschuld, da sie ihm nicht gestehen kann, dass Simone ihr eigener Vater sei. Der Doge naht, Gabriele versteckt sich und wird nun, gepeinigt von Eifersucht, Zeuge einer zärtlichen Szene zwischen Vater und Tochter, wobei Simone von dem Gedanken gequält wird, dass seine Tochter seinen Verräter liebe (dieses Einzelheit geht auf eine Textbearbeitung Boitos zurück, der dadurch das Finale des 1. Aktes noch dramatischer gestaltete). Boccanegra bleibt allein und fällt in Schlummer. Jetzt glaubt Adorno den Augenblick gekommen, den Schlafenden zu ermorden. Amelias Dazwischentreten verhindert die Tat. Von dem erwachenden Dogen erfährt Adorno nun endlich Amelias Herkunft. Von draussen dringt der Lärm der Aufrührer.

**Dritter Akt.** Im Palast des Dogen. Fiesco wird in Freiheit gesetzt. Paolo, den man mit einer Waffe unter den Aufständischen entdeckt hat, wird gefangengenommen und verurteilt. Aus dem Palastinnern dringen die Stimmen des Chors, die Hochzeitszeremonie für Amelia und Paolo ist in vollem Gang. Paolo weiss, dass die Rache nicht mehr lange auf sich warten lässt und dass das Gift, das er Simone gab, nun bald wirken muss. Im folgenden Gespräch entdeckt Simone dem Fiesco Amelia Grimaldis wirklichen Namen: Maria Boccanegra. Ihre Mutter ist Fiescos unglückliche Tochter, die er einst liebte. Jacopo reicht erschüttert dem Verführer seines Kindes die Hand zur Versöhnung. Das Brautpaar erscheint, Simone segnet den Bund mit letzter Kraft. Er stirbt, nachdem er Adorno zu seinem Nachfolger bestimmt hat. Maria Fieschi Boccanegra, jetzt Gattin Adornos, beweint erschüttert den Tod ihres Vaters. Während dumpfes Glockengeläut ertönt und alle niederknien, verklingt die Oper.



Milano, Italy - May 10, 1965

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# personaggi e interpreti

## nel prologo

Simon Boccanegra, corsaro al servizio della Repubblica	GIANGIACOMO GUELF
Jacopo Fiesco, nobile genovese	NICOLAI GHIAUROV
Paolo Albiani, filatore d'oro genovese	ROLANDO PANERAI
Pietro, popolano di Genova	ANTONIO ZERBINI

## nel dramma

Simon Boccanegra, primo doge di Genova	GIANGIACOMO GUELF
Maria, sua figlia, sotto il nome di Amelia Grimaldi	GABRIELLA TUCCI
Jacopo Fiesco, sotto il nome di Andrea	NICOLAI GHIAUROV
Gabriele Adorno, gentiluomo genovese	BRUNO PREVEDI
Paolo Albiani, cortigiano favorito del doge	ROLANDO PANERAI
Pietro, altro cortigiano	ANTONIO ZERBINI
Un capitano dei balestrieri	GIUSEPPE BERTINAZZO
Un'ancella di Amelia	MIRELLA FIORENTINI

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**GIANDREA GAVAZZENI**

Maestro del coro  
**ROBERTO BENAGLIO**

Regia di  
**MARGHERITA WALLMANN**

Bozzetti e figurini di  
**NICOLA BENOIS**

Direttore dell'allestimento scenico  
**NICOLA BENOIS**

Scene realizzate da  
CARLO IGHINA - MARIO MANTOVANI - VINCENZO PIGNATARO

Direttore musicale del palcoscenico  
RAINALDO ZAMBONI

Regista collaboratore  
ANTONELLO MADAU DIAZ

Maestro rammentatore  
VASCO NALDINI

Maestro collaboratore  
GIUSEPPE DI LUGGO

Maestro della banda  
FRANCO LIZZIO

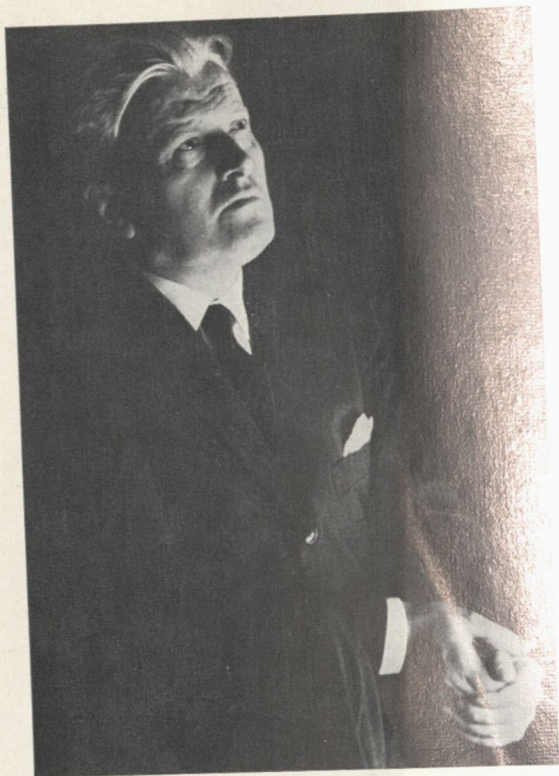
Direttore dei servizi tecnici  
**GIULIO LUPETTI**

Capo reparto macchinisti  
LUIGI REGAZZI

Capo della sartoria  
MARIO SECCHI

Capo servizio costruzioni  
CARLO IGHINA

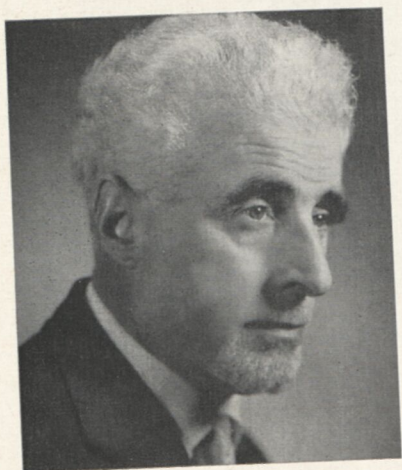




GIANANDREA GAVAZZENI



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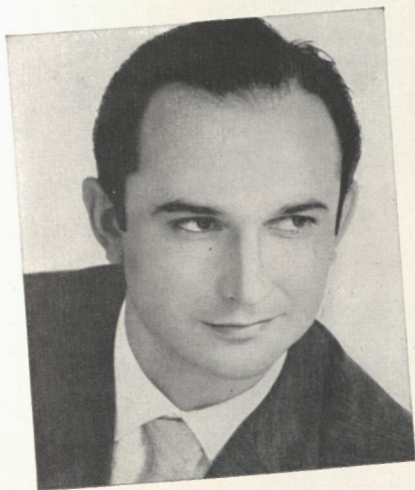
TA WALLMANN



GABRIELLA TUCCI



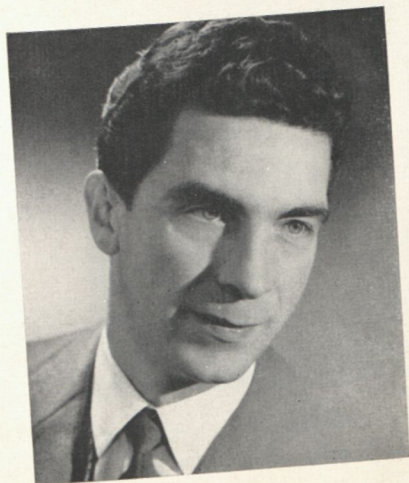
GIANGIACOMO GUEFFI



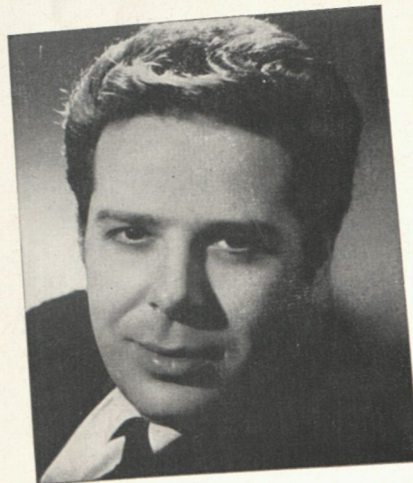
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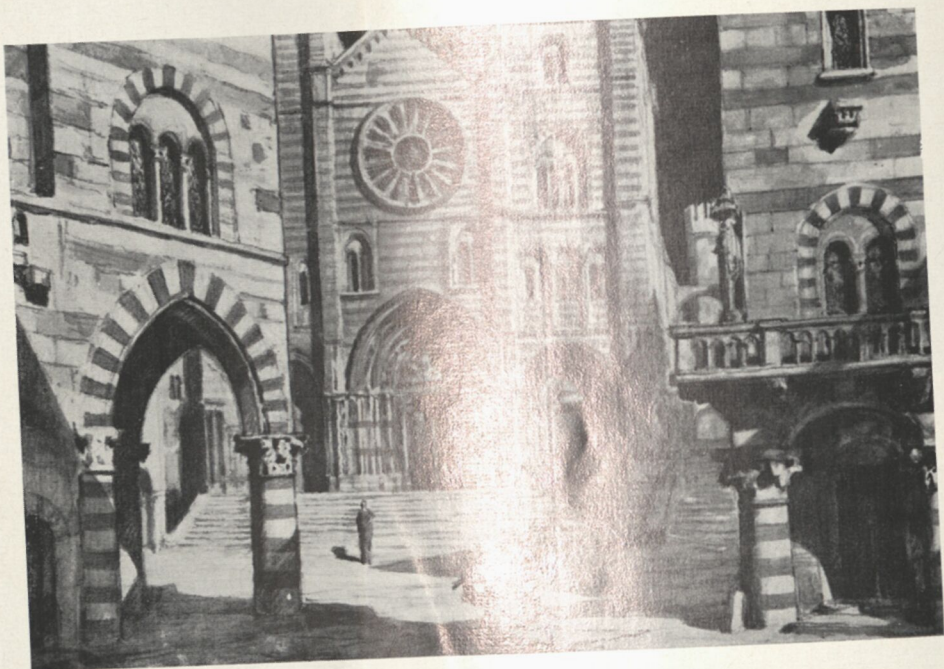


ROLANDO PANERAI

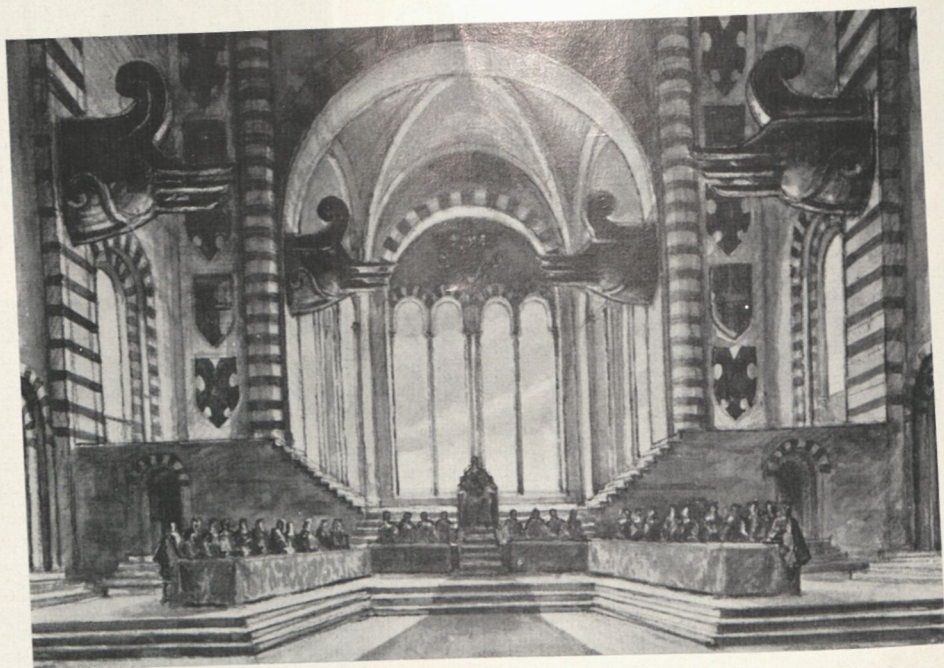


NICOLA BENOIS





Prologo.



Atto I, scena II.

Bozzetti di Nicola Benois.



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Figurini di Nicola Benois.

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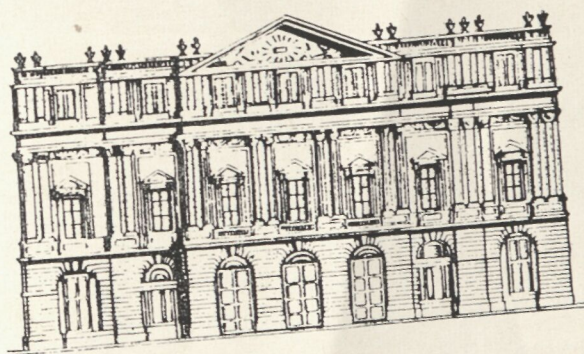
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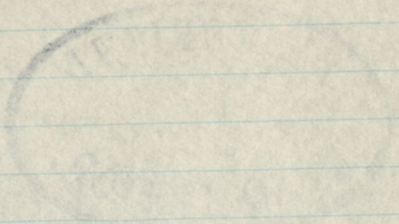
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